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# SWAFFHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Report for year ending December 31st, 1943

by the

## MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

To the Chairman and Members of the Rural District Council.

Ladies & Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report on the health of the District for the year 1943. This will be an Interim Report and includes the Annual Report of the Sanitary Inspector set out in Tabular form.

| | Total. | Male. | Female. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Live Births, | 130 | 76 | 54 |
| Legitimate | | 68 | 50 |
| Illegitimate | | 8 | 4 |

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population.....16.5....

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Still Births, | | | |
| Legitimate | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| Illegitimate | | - | - |

Rate per 1,000 (Live or Still) Births.....52.....

Deaths..... 90

Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated Resident population..... 11.4

Deaths from Puerperal causes, (Headings 29 & 30) of the Registrar General's Short List:

| | | Deaths. | Rate for 1,000 total Live & Still Births |
|---|---|---|---|
| No. 29 | Puerperal Sepsis | Nil. | Nil. |
| No. 30 | Other Puerperal causes | Nil. | Nil. |

| | Total. | Male. | Female. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Deaths of Infants under 1 year | 7 | 4 | 3 |

All Infants per 1,000 live births..... .53

Legitimate Infants per 1,000 Legitimate Live Births..... 15.0

Illegitimate -do- ..... 1.5

Deaths from Cancer all ages ..... 14

Deaths from Measles " " ..... Nil.

Deaths from Whooping Cough all ages..... Nil.

Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 yrs. of age)..... Nil.

Particulars of any unusual or excessive mortality during the year which has received or required comment:

Two deaths occurred from Tuberculosis, and three fatal road accidents.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supplies: Shortage was experienced towards the latter end of the year. The water level dropped rapidly during September and some wells dried up. Opportunity was taken to have these wells cleaned out.

No. of samples taken..... 15

Satisfactory..... 13
Unfit for use..... 2

Well-covers repaired..... 7

Wells closed ..... 1

Rivers & Streams. Many of these were cleaned out by mechanical means. Foul ditches were also cleaned. The open sewer ditches in the parishes of East Bradenham and Sporle were offensive during the warmer months.
The River Tiddey at Sanam was heavily polluted with sewerage from Watton (Wayland R.D.C.).

Drainage. Systems reconstructed..... 8

Cesspools cleared..... 5

Closet Accommodation. The old insanitary privy vaults are still being converted wherever possible. In some parishes cottages have very little or no ground to dispose properly of this refuse and more facilities should be provided.

No. of Privy Vaults converted..... 12

Public Cleansing.
5 Parishes have schemes for the collection of refuse (not including night soil) and your Sanitary Inspector succeeded by personal interview with the Parish Council concerned in adding the Parish of Holme Hale to this number.
The refuse dumps at Necton and Mundford were cleared up four times during the year.

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Notifiable Disease (other than Tuberculosis)

| Disease. | Cases Notified. | Admitted to Hospital. | Deaths. |
|---|---|---|---|
| C.S.F. ... ... ... ... ... ... | - | - | - |
| Small Pox. ... ... ... ... ... | - | - | - |
| Scarlet Fever. ... ... ... ... | 8 | 2 | - |
| Diphtheria ... ... ... ... ... | - | - | - |
| Enteric Fever. incl. Para Typhoid | - | - | - |
| Puerperal Fever... ... ... ... | 1 | - | - |
| Pneumonia. ... ... ... ... ... | 5 | - | - |
| Erysipelas ... ... ... ... ... | 4 | - | - |
| Whooping Cough ... ... ... ... | 26 | - | - |
| Measles... ... ... ... ... ... | 42 | - | - |
| Acute Poliomylitis. | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Dysentery. ... ... ... ... ... | 1 | 1 | - |
| Catarrhal Jaundice ... ... ... | 2 | - | - |

Whooping Cough and Measles occurred mainly in the villages of Foulden, Gt. Cressingham, Weeting and Bradenham. Scarlet Fever cases were scattered. The Dysentery case was notified from a Military Camp.

Prevalence of, and control over, Infectious Disease & other Diseases.

Cases of Measles and Whooping Cough are invariably nursed at home, and as the majority of cases occur in villages isolation is almost impossible in the house and children are allowed when convalescent to mix at will with other healthy children in the village. Whilst everything is done to impress upon the parents that infectious children should be kept apart this is not the practice for the most part, and therefore the diseases become more wide spread than they need be. I am often asked to close the school when an epidemic starts in a village, but such measures, unless the attendance becomes severely depleted, results in still less control over the child population. It would help matters if more children suffering from these diseases could be sent to an Isolation Hospital provided that beds are available.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

A record is kept and checked quarterly of the numbers of children immunised against Diphtheria. By December 31st. 1943, 44.5% of children under 5 years have been immunised, and 92.6% of children between the ages of 5 and 15 years. District Nurses and Welfare Workers have been asked to help in improving the figures for children under 5, and in some districts there have been an increase in numbers requiring this benefit.

TUBERCULOSIS.
New Cases and Mortality during the year 1943.

| Age Periods. | New Cases. | | | | Deaths. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Respiratory. | | Non-Resp. | | Resp. | | Non-Resp. | |
| | M. | F. | M. | F. | M. | F. | M. | F. |
| 1. | | | 1 | | | | | |
| 5, | | | | 1 | | | | |
| 15. | | | 1 | 2 | | | | |
| 25. | | 1 | | 1 | | | | |
| 35. | | 4 | 1 | | | | 1 | |
| 45. | | | | | | | | |
| 50. | | | | | | | | |
| 60. | 1 | | | | 1 | | | |
| 65. | | | | | | | | |
| TOTALS. | 1 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 1 | | 1 | |

A Register of all cases is kept. Premises are disinfected after removal of patient to Hospital, or upon death.

The number of cases on the Register at the end of the year totalled 49 against 40 in the year 1942.

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I have the honour to be,
Ladies & Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,

C. S. HALL-SMITH,

Medical Officer of Health.

# ANNUAL REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR

## Year Ending December 31st, 1943.

| | |
|---|---|
| Inspections made under Public Health Acts | 146 |
| " " " Housing Acts | 216 |
| Complaints investigated | 69 |
| Informal Notices served. (Public Health Acts) | 40 |
| " " " (Housing Acts) | 31 |
| Interviews | 23 |
| No. of Houses repaired and improved | 32 |
| " " Demolition Orders made | 1 |
| Nuisances abated | 37 |
| Visits re Infectious Disease | 17 |
| " " Scabies | 29 |
| " " Verminous premises | 28 |
| " " " Persons | 12 |
| Houses disinfected | 17 |
| Visits to T. B. cases (estimated) & Investigation of Milk Supply. | 15 |
| Inspections of Refuse Dumps | 56 |
| Investigations of Rats Infestation | 23 |
| Special Visits to Military Camps, (a) re Vermin | 12 |
| (b) Effluent from Sewerage Plants | 14 |
| " " to Parish Council Meetings re Scavenging | 4 |
| Drainage systems reconstructed | 10 |
| Privies converted to Pail Closets | 12 |
| Public House urinals reconstructed | 2 |
| Foul Ditches and Water courses cleared | 7 |
| Miscellaneous Visits | 50 |
| Milk & Dairies Orders: Cowsheds and dairies inspected | 285 |
| " " yards improved | 17 |
| Samples of Milk taken for biological test | 125 |
| No. of samples proved Positive | NIL. |
| Special Visits re proposed Accredited Licences | 12 |
| Milk (Special Designation) Orders: No. of Accredited Producers | 20 |
| " " T. T. Producers | 2 |

| | |
|---|---|
| No. of Samples taken | 39 |
| passed 1st. test | 31 |
| Failures | 8 |
| Repeat Samples | 8 |
| Failures | 1 |
| Licences suspended | 1 |

Meat & Food Inspection. 26 special visits were made to the Slaughter House in Swaffham (Ministry of Food) to inspect emergency killed animals.

Shops inspected ..... 22
A small amount of tinned goods were found unfit and destroyed.

Salvage of Waste Paper, Rags, Bones &c. As Salvage Officer and Chief Organiser I beg to report that 31 tons. 2 cwts. of this material was collected by voluntary effort during the year. Sales amounted to £149.13.1. This is a decided drop compared with 1942, when over 55 tons were collected and sold for £240. Nearly all villages have worked well but labour was urgently needed on the land, and collectors naturally gave this work priority.

All surplus moneys after paying cost of cartage and postages are returned to the villages.

Yours obediently,

W. H. EDWARDS,

Sanitary Inspector.

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# SWAFFHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

## Report for the year ending December 31st. 1944.

## by the

## Medical Officer of Health.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH
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To the Chairman and Members of the Rural District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to present my Annual Report on the Health of the District for the year 1944, in which is included the Report of your Sanitary Inspector.

Some of the restrictions imposed during the years 1939-1944 have now been removed, and I am thus able to give more details for your information.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE AREA.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Area (in Acres) | - | 98,816 |
| Estimate of Resident Population mid 1944 | - | 7,440 |
| Rateable Value | - | £80,538 |
| Sum represented by a Penny Rate | - | £95 |

The District is composed of 29 Parishes. The North Eastern Area is the most populated, while that of the South East and West is very scattered and contains large areas of land in the control of the Forestry Commission.

| LIVE BIRTHS. | Total. | Male. | Female. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Legitimate | 117 | 55 | 62 |
| Illegitimate | 19 | 10 | 9 |

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population - 18·2

STILL BIRTHS.

Legitimate - NIL Illegitimate - 1

Rate per 1,000 (Live or Still) Births - 7·3

DEATHS. Total - 91 Male - 50 Female - 41

Death rate per 1,000 of estimated Resident Population - 12·2

Deaths from Puerperal causes (Headings 29 & 30) of the Registrar General's Short List.

| | Deaths. | Rate per 1,000. |
|---|---|---|
| No. 29. Puerperal Sepsis - | NIL | NIL. |
| No. 30. Other Puerperal causes- | " | " |

| | Total. | Male. | Female. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Deaths of Infants under 1 Year. | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| | | (All Legitimate) | |

All Infants per 1,000 Live Births - 29·4
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 Legitimate Live Births - 34·2
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 Illegitimate Live Births - NIL

| | Total. | Male. | Female. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Deaths from Cancer, all ages | 17 | 7 | 10 |
| " " Measles " " | NIL. | | |
| " " Whooping Cough | 1 | 1 | - |
| " " Diarrhoea (under two years of age) | | | - NIL. |

Particulars of any unusual or excessive mortality during the year which has received or required comment:-

28 Deaths occurred due to Heart Failure
3 " " " " Road Accidents

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

Public Health Officers.

1. District Medical Officer of Health.
2. Sanitary Inspector - Certified Royal Sanitary Institute, London, and Meat and Food Inspector, Cert. " "

HOSPITALS. Cases are sent to the following:-

1. Cottage Hospitals (a) Swaffham (b) Watton.
2. West Norfolk and King's Lynn General Hospital.
3. Norfolk and Norwich General Hospital.
4. Jenny Lind Hospital, Norwich.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The Norfolk County Council Isolation Hospital, East Dereham admits cases of infectious disease where isolation is impossible, or not desired. For the most part, more serious cases are sent including Scarlet Fever, Diptheria, Puerperal Fever. Cases of Whooping Cough and Measles are nursed at home.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water supply.

The chief source of supply is from wells, many of which are shallow and unfit for domestic use, contamination being shown when samples have been taken after heavy rains.

During the five years preceding 1940, a number of deep bores were sunk providing a plentiful supply in some villages. Villages relying mostly on wells were extremely short of water, and water had to be carted to provide a domestic supply to the village of Mundford and parts of Sporle.

Proposed schemes were prepared by your Sanitary Inspector for suggested supply to individual villages, and 38 visits were made to various parishes in regard to the water shortage. He also attended two Parish Council meetings to discuss the matter.

The water level in the bores also fell considerably. One new boring was sunk in Mundford to supply the School.

There are no public water mains, a few isolated groups of cottages have a standpipe supply from a source derived from bores situated mainly at the farm close by. The Council also have two Housing Sites with water laid on to the houses. This supply is also from bores.

Where wells had dried up, advantage was taken to have them cleaned out, deepened and repaired.

| SAMPLES TAKEN. | | |
|---|---|---|
| Total | | 19 |
| Satisfactory | - | 5 |
| Polluted | - | 5 |
| Doubtful | - | 9 |
| Wells cleaned and repaired | - | 16 |

RIVERS AND STREAMS.

Sewerage from the town of Watton in the adjoining Rural District of Wayland was discharged into an open water course in this Area, causing a nuisance in the dry weather and summer months. Overloading of the system was mainly the cause.

Effluent from sewerage plant at South Pickenham and Bodney U.S.A.A.F. Camps was also discharged into streams causing a nuisance and heavy pollution. Samples were taken of the river water, and the matter referred to the Norfolk County Council who are the Local Authority for river pollution.

OPEN SEWER DITCHES.

Improvement was made to the open street sewer ditch at East Bradenham by thorough cleansing and re-levelling. At Sporle, 400 yards ofefflucent pipe was laid under the bed of the Street ditch resulting in abating a long standing nuisance.

The complete piping and filling in of these open sewers should be of primary consideration in the immediate post-war planning schemes.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Drainage Systems reconstructed | - | 17 |
| " " in progress | - | 3 |

**CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.**

There are still a number of the old obsolete insanitary privy middens. Except in a few cases, these have been found to be undermined by rats and are a danger to health by these vermin and flies which carry disease, especially dysentery and summer diarrhoea. During the 15 years that your Sanitary Inspector has been in your Service, he has made strenuous efforts to have these vaults replaced by the more hygienic sanitary pail, with facilities for the proper cleansing of the conveniences. Several people have installed modern Chemical Closets.

Groups of houses in some villages have very small gardens in which to dispose of this type of refuse, which resultant contamination of the soil. In my opinion, the removal and proper disposal of night soil from the more thickly populated areas should be seriously considered for the improvement of public health.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

Six parishes (Sporle, East and West Bradenham, Great Cressingham, Gooderstone and Holme Hale) have schemes in operation for the periodical collection of refuse, which is much appreciated by the inhabitants, and efforts are still being made to get the other parishes to adopt this method. A number of disused gravel pits are used for the disposal of this refuse. 29 inspections were made of these dumps during the year.

## Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

Your Sanitary Inspector reports as under,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my 16th Annual Report as follows,

In addition to my duties as Sanitary Inspector, I acted as your Housing Officer for the first seven months of the year, being responsible for the maintenance of existing Council houses, collection of rents, and the completion of four new houses built for Agricultural Workers in the village of Sporle.

Annual Report 1944.

Housing. Informal notices and letters sent requesting repairs resulted in 9 cottages being made reasonably fit for habitation, and work put in hand on 16 others.

Labour shortage became more acute during the year, and Owners of property are finding increasing difficulty in getting even essential repairs carried out.

Most of the houses condemned in 1939 are still occupied owing to the general shortage of houses. A survey of 10 Parishes commenced in August of this year, under the Housing Rural Survey, revealed 204 houses to be absolutely unfit for habitation by reason of extreme dampness, disrepair, lack of light and ventilation, and ordinary amenities.

Many of these houses are overcrowded by reason of the families growing up, and having no other accommodation available. I have found children up to the age of 12 and 14 of both sexes sleeping in one room, and in one or two cases, a grown up daughter is sharing a bedroom with her parents.

Additional accommodation cannot be provided in the majority of these cases, except by a new house.

One undertaking not to relet after vacation, was accepted, but other accommodation has not been found to date.

One owner took advantage of the Rural Workers Act, to build a wing to each of two cottages, and plans for the conversion of two cottages into one house have been prepared.

In another instance, additional bedroom and living space space is contemplated to two small cottages.

Much more of this reconstruction work is urgently required, and in the 10 villages surveyed to date, 249 houses could be similarly dealt with, and improved.

| | |
|---|---|
| Complaints investigated..... | 81. |
| Inspections made under, | |
| Public Health Acts ....., | 77 |
| Housing Acts | 73 |
| Rural Workers Act..... | 9 |
| Informal notices served..... | 69 |
| Houses repaired, improved... | 25 |
| Visits re Rat & Mice Infestation ..... | 45 |
| Visits re Infectious Disease | 41 |
| " " Scabies | 4 |
| " " Verminous Houses... | 12 |
| Houses disinfected ..... | 24 |
| Miscellaneous visits ..... | 39 |
| Addition Sanitary Conveniences Provided .... | 6. |
| Cesspools emptied ..... | 22 |
| Accumulations of refuse removed... | 12 |
| Special visits to Military Camp Sewerage plants ..... | 6 |

## MILK AND DAIRIES ORDER - 1926.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Inspections to Cowsheds and Dairies | - | 149 |
| Cowsheds and Dairies improved | - | 4 |
| Milk(Special Designation)Orders. Special inspections | - | 60 |
| Number of Accredited Producers | - | 18 |
| " " T.T. " | - | 3 |
| Total Number of Samples taken | - | 53 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1st. half year | - | taken | 22 | passed | 22 | | |
| 2nd. " " | - | " | 19 | " | 12 | failed | 7 |
| Repeat samples | - | " | 9 | " | 7 | " | 2 |
| 2nd. " " | - | " | 2 | " | 1 | " | 1 |
| 3rd. " " | - | " | 1 | " | 1 | | |

During the year two Accredited Producers gave up the trade, and one left the District.
Two Producers were granted Accredited Licences and two obtained T.T. Licences.

## MILK SAMPLING AGAINST THE PRESENCE OF TUBERCLE BACILLI.

95 Samples were taken from herds used for Village retail supplies, and all were proved Negative.

## MEAT AND FOOD INSPECTION.

Your Sanitary Inspector, who is also a Certificated Meat and Food Inspector, carries out Special examination of emergency slaughtered animals at the Ministry of Food Slaughter house in Swaffham, on behalf of the Swaffham Urban District Council. 25 such visits were made.
10 Special visits were made in various villages to examine suspected unsound tinned foods.

In addition to my normal duties as Sanitary Inspector, I was responsible for additional duties as under:-

## 1. SALVAGE.

I organised the collection of Waste Paper and Material for Salvage from April 1940 to December 1944. During these years 159½ Tons were collected and sold for £739 - 16 - 0. The money after the cost of carriage and postage was deducted, was given back to the villages for the benefit of their charitable funds.

## 2. GAS DECONTAMINATION.

I was also responsible for the training of a Decontamination Squad and was appointed Deputy Liaison Officer for West Norfolk. A considerable amount of my own time was taken up with Training and Exercises.

Yours obediently,

W.H. EDWARDS.

Notifiable Disease (Other than Tuberculosis)

| | Cases Notified | Admitted to Hospital | Deaths. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Scarlet Fever. | 22 | 9 | |
| Puerperal " | 2 | | |
| Pneumonia | 8 | | |
| Whooping Cough | 72 | | 1 |
| Measles | 89 | | |
| Para Typhoid | 2 | | |
| Erysipelas | 1 | | |
| C.S.M | 1 | | |
| Diptheria | 2 | | |
| Infective Jaundice | 18 | | |

The Scarlet Fever patients were as follows,
Hilborough 5 Gooderstone 4 Saham Toney 4
Remainer of cases were scattered.

Whooping Cough. Epidemic at Sporle, Nth Pickenham, & Necton.
45 cases being notified in these villages

Measles. Epidemic at Saham Toney & Lt Cressinghan.
41 cases being notified.

Para Typhoid. Occurred at a Military Camp.

Diptheria. These patients were removed to Hospital, but the diagnosis was not confirmed.

Infective Jaundice. These were isolated cases, which occurred throughout the District at various times of the year.

Tuberculosis. 49 patients remain on the Register.
This is the same number as at the end of 1943.
During the year, 10 cases were added. These were mostly transfers from other Districts.

Cases removed. 4 patients left the District.
4 " recovered.
1 " died
1 " Diagnosis not confirmed.

New Cases and Mortality during the year 1944.

| Age. | Respiratory M. | Respiratory F. | Non Respiratory. M | Non Respiratory. F | Deaths Resp. M | Deaths Resp. F | Deaths Non Resp. M | Deaths Non Resp. F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | 1 | | | | | |
| 15 | | | | | | | | |
| 25 | | 2 | | | | | | |
| 35 | | | | | | | | |
| 45 | | 1 | | | | | | |
| 50 | | | | | | | | |
| 55 | | | | | | | | |
| 60 | | | 1 | | | | | |
| 65 | | | | | | | | |

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND OTHER DISEASES.

Cases of infectious disease nursed at home still cause some anxiety at present. It is almost impossible to prevent epidemics starting in villages because of the lack of control of parents keeping infectious children isolated. This is particularly noteworthy in cases of Measles and Whooping Cough. There is not accommodation available at the Isolation Hospital for all such cases, and if there were, it would be difficult to persuade parents to allow their children to go.

DIPTHERIA IMMUNISATION. - to end of December 1944.

| | |
|---|---|
| Children under 5 years of age | - 636 |
| " between age of 5 and 15 | - 1136 |

Percentage of children which above figures represent:-

| | |
|---|---|
| Children under 5 | - 57·55% |
| " between 5 and 15 | - 93·47% |

I have the honour to be,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

C.S. HALL-SMITH.